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Ontario

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO CERTAIN
DEATHS AT THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN AND
RELATED MATTERS.

Hearing held
8th floor
180 Dundas Street West
Toronto, Ontario

The Honourable Mr. Justice S.G.M. Grange

Commissioner

P.S.A. Lamek, Q.C.

Counsel

E.A. Cronk

Associate Counsel

Thomas Millar

Administrator

Transcript of evidence
for
February 20, 1984

VOLUME 106

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ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO CERTAIN
DEATHS AT THE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN
AND RELATED MATTERS.

Hearing held on the 8th Floor,
180 Dundas Street West, Toronto,
Ontario, on Monday, the 20th
day of February, 1984.

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE S.G.M. GRANGE - Commissioner
THOMAS MILLAR - Administrator
MURRAY R. ELLIOT - Registrar

APPEARANCES:

P.S.A. LAMEK, Q.C.) Commission Counsel
D. HUNT) Counsel for the Attorney
L. CECCHETTO) General and Solicitor General
of Ontario (Crown Attorneys
and Coroner's Office)
I.J. ROLAND) Counsel for The Hospital for
M. THOMSON) Sick Children
R. BATTY)
B. PERCIVAL, Q.C.) Counsel for The Metropolitan
D. YOUNG) Toronto Police
K. CHOWN Counsel for numerous Doctors
at The Hospital for Sick
Children
F. KITELY) Counsel for the Registered
E. McINTYRE) Nurses' Association of Ontario
and 35 Registered Nurses at
The Hospital for Sick Children

(Cont'd)...



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APPEARANCES: (Continued)

D. BROWN	Counsel for Susan Nelles - Nurse
E. FORSTER	Counsel for Phyllis Trayner - Nurse
J.A. OLAH	Counsel for Janet Brownless - R.N.A.
B. KNAZAN	Counsel for Mrs. M. Christie - R.N.A.
S. LABOW	Counsel for Mr. & Mrs. Gosselin, Mr. & Mrs. Gionas, Mr. & Mrs. Inwood, Mr. & Mrs. Turner, Mr. & Mrs. Lutes, and Mr. & Mrs. Murphy (parents of deceased children)
F.J. SHANAHAN	Counsel for Mr. & Mrs. Dominic Lombardo (parents of deceased child Stephanie Lombardo); and Heather Dawson (mother of deceased child Amber Dawson)
W.W. TOBIAS	Counsel for Mr. & Mrs. Hines (parents of deceased child Jordan Hines)
J. SHINEHOFT	Counsel for Lorie Pacsai and Kevin Garnet (parents of deceased child Kevin Pacsai).



E R R A T A

Volume 102 - Monday, February 13, 1984

Page 3111, Lines 13, 16, 23 - "Bilodeau" should be
"Vielleux"

Page 3112, line 3 - "Adamo" should be "Adario"

Page 3113, line 10 - "Bilodeau" should be "Vielleux"

Volume 103 - Tuesday, February 14, 1984

Page 3351, line 7 - "release" should be "relief"

Page 3419, line 19 - "flowing" should be "falling"



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A/EMT /ak

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--- Upon commencing at 2:30 p.m.

4

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes, Miss Kitley.

5

MS. KITELY: Mr. Commissioner,

6

before Mr. Lamek gets on with the next witness, I wonder if I might have a brief opportunity on the same topic that we dealt with last Thursday.

7

8

Might I say, sir, that I have reviewed

9

the transcript of the hearing on February 16th with Gail Paech, the President of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. She and I have concluded

10

11

that the controversy over statements made outside of the hearing room is unfortunate and may detract from the important issues before this Commission.

12

13

14

On Thursday last I indicated that

15

there was no intention, either on my part or the part of representatives of the RNAO to offend the Commissioner or this Commission. I would like to emphasize this lack of intention.

16

17

18

The President of the RNAO and I

19

regret that offence has been taken either by you, sir, or by other counsel at this hearing. We hope that this expression of regret will assist in bringing this unfortunate controversy to an end.

20

21

22

Thank you for your indulgence, sir.

23

THE COMMISSIONER: I note two things.

24

25



1
2 First that you say nothing about whether you had
3 intended to offend other counsel. You say nothing
4 about what your intentions are in future.

5 Are those deliberate?

6 MS. KITELY: In my remarks I indicated,
7 sir, that there was no intention to offend the
8 Commissioner or the Commission and that is meant in
9 a literal way to include --

10 THE COMMISSIONER: Is that to include --

11 MS. KITELY: -- other lawyers too,
12 sir.

13 THE COMMISSIONER: It would have
14 been better if you had added that.

15 MS. KITELY: Yes, sir.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: What about your
17 intentions in the future?

18 MS. KITELY: That is a problem, sir,
19 which we have grappled with at some length over the
20 weekend, and I would like to be in a position to
21 give you certain assurances. I cannot do that, sir.

22 The Registered Nurses' Association
23 is a large organization. We are not in a position
24 to say what I think is necessary to satisfy you,
25 and so I can give you no assurances about the future.

THE COMMISSIONER: You say you



1
2
3 can't give me any assurances with regard to your
4 clients. What about yourself? Can you give me any
5 assurances with regard to yourself as to your conduct?

6 MS. KITELY: No, sir.

7 THE COMMISSIONER: Yes. All right,
8 thank you.

9 Thank you, Mrs. Kitley.

10 MS. KITELY: Thank you, sir.

11 THE COMMISSIONER: Mr. Lamek?

12 MR. LAMEK: May I call, please,
13 Miss Kathy Coulson.

14 MR. ROLAND: Mr. Commissioner, before
15 we start with Miss Coulson I just would like to
16 let you know that thanks to the efforts of
17 Miss Thomson we have produced for Mr. Lamek tour end
18 reports. We have bound a volume for him. There are
19 a great many of them, and we have provided him with
20 a loose volume as well so that he can xerox them for
21 the rest of the counsel. We haven't been able to
22 do all that but we provided all of them with an
23 index and numbered pages.

24 THE COMMISSIONER: Very good.

25 MR. ROLAND: Miss Thomson was working
all weekend.

THE COMMISSIONER: I am grateful to



1
2 you, and I am even more grateful to Miss Thomson.

3 MR. LAMEK: I certainly agree with
4 that, Mr. Commissioner. I haven't had a chance to
5 look at them yet. Perhaps therefore I can reserve
6 putting them in as an exhibit until tomorrow morning.

7 THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

8 KATHLEEN COULSON, Sworn

9 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LAMEK:

10 Q. Miss Coulson, you are employed
11 by the Hospital for Sick Children?

12 A. Yes, I am.

13 Q. Currently I understand in
14 the Research Institute?

15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. What are your duties there,
17 please?

18 A. I am the nurse co-ordinator
19 for the Spontaneous Abortion Mycoplasma Study.

20 Q. I'm sorry, could you give
21 me the name of the study again, please?

22 A. I am nurse co-ordinator for
23 the Spontaneous Abortion Mycoplasma Study.

24 Q. And you have occupied that
25 position I understand since September of last year?

A. That is right.



1

2

3

Q. Prior to that what were your
duties at the Hospital?

4

5

A. I was head nurse on an infant
medical floor.

6

Q. Which floor, please?

7

A. 4D as in David.

8

9

10

Q. And in the period from July,
1980 to March 1981, the period which is of particular
interest to us, I understand you were a nursing
supervisor?

11

12

A. Yes, I was one of the 11:00 to
7:00 nursing supervisors.

13

14

Q. Working the night shift so I
understand?

15

A. That is right.

16

17

Q. I believe you had worked at
the Hospital for Sick Children in that capacity since
February of 1980?

18

19

A. That is right.

20

21

Q. Very briefly by way of back-
ground you received your nursing training at St. Mary's
General Hospital in Kitchener?

22

A. That is right.

23

24

Q. And graduated in 1969 as a
registered nurse?

25



1

2

A. Yes.

3

4

Q. As I understand it your very
first job after graduation, a nursing job at the
Hospital for Sick Children?

5

6

A. That is right.

7

8

Q. You were a staff nurse there
on 4D?

9

A. That is right.

10

Q. That as I understand it is an
infant medical ward?

11

A. Yes.

12

13

Q. Then you got a little bit of
a travel bug as I understand it. In 1972 you went
to Bermuda for a year?

14

15

A. Yes.

16

Q. And worked there as a nurse?

17

A. Yes.

18

Q. Subsequently you spent some
time travelling in Europe and on your trips to Canada
you would work as a per diem nurse at the Hospital
for Sick Children?

19

20

21

A. That is right.

22

Q. In 1973 you worked, although as
I understand it, not as a nurse, at the Sancta Maria
House which is a halfway home for teenage girls.

23

24

25



1

2

A. Yes.

3

4

Q. Operated under the auspices of
the Ministry of Corrections?

5

6

A. It is in conjunction with the
Ministry of Corrections.

7

8

9

Q. And then from September 1974
until February 1980 you worked as a nurse on the
children's ward of the Princess Margaret Hospital in
Toronto?

10

11

A. That is right.

12

13

Q. And then to the Hospital for
Sick Children as a night supervisor as you have told
us?

14

15

16

A. Yes.

17

18

19

20

21

Q. You thus had if I may say so
a varied and interesting sounding professional career?

22

23

A. That is right.

24

25

Q. Miss Coulson, we have heard
from Mrs. Johnstone that the Cardiology Wards were
supervised by her when she was on duty and by you
when you were on duty in her absence. Does that
fairly summarize your experience as a night supervisor?

A. That happened most of the time,
yes.

Q. Now we prepared with



1
2 Mrs. Johnstone's help a couple of charts, and I take
3 it that you have seen, if not read in its entirety,
4 the Atlanta Report?

5 A. Yes, I have.

6 Q. You are aware that the authors
7 of that report and their consultants categorized the
8 deaths with which we are concerned under three headings,
9 A, B and C; those falling under Categories A and B
10 being those to which they believed some greater or
11 lesser degree of suspicion attached.

12 A. (Nods).

13 Q. With Mrs. Johnstone's help we
14 constructed two charts. One of the Category A
15 deaths and the second of the Category B deaths
16 showing the presence of night supervisors for each
17 of those deaths, and indicating with an asterisk who
18 was in charge of Wards 4A and B. And forgive us,
19 we filled in a number of check marks and asterisks
20 under your name, and I think you were here when that
21 evidence was given, were you not?

22 A. No, I wasn't here when that was
23 done.

24 Q. I wonder if you could cast an
25 eye over those two charts, please, and let us know
whether to the best of your recollection we have



1
2
3 correctly identified the nights when you were present
4 in the Hospital and those deaths which occurred on
5 nights when you were supervising Wards 4A and B?

6 Can you see them from there?

7 A. Yes, they go along with what
8 my record does.

9 Q. Thank you.

10 Now, Mrs. Johnstone also told us
11 something of the course of her duties on the normal
12 night shift as a supervisor. She told us that she
13 arrives at 11:00, 11:15, takes report, spends some
14 time reviewing the tour end reports, and then about
15 12:00 to 12:30, 1 o'clock, goes out on her first
16 round of the wards of her area.

17 Does the first part of your shift
18 follow that general pattern, or did it at that time?

19 A. Yes, it did.

20 Q. She told us when she was
21 supervising 4A and B which was almost every night
22 when she was on, she would normally start her tour
23 of wards in that area of the Hospital.

24 Would you similarly start your tour
25 on the 4th floor?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Were you normally in charge of



1
2 the medical wards on that floor, 4C and D?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And if you were supervising
5 those wards on a particular night is that where you
6 would normally start your tour of the wards?

7 A. Yes, usually.

8 Q. And if you were also supervising
9 4A and B, the cardiology wards on the 4th floor,
10 would those be among your early calls on your tour
11 of the wards?

12 A. Yes. It would depend on which
13 end I would start; 4C/D or 4A/B.

14 Q. All right. So that your visit
15 to the cardiology ward if you were supervising it
16 would be your first or second stop?

17 A. That is right.

18 Q. In your tour of the wards?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And then she told us of the
21 balance of the night that she would return to the
22 wards later on in the shift, attend to the staffing
23 needs and so on.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I take it that is the course of
a normal shift for you?



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2

A. That is right.

3

Q. On those days when you were

4

night supervisor.

5

A. Yes.

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Q Miss Coulson, it is clear from the chart and I look particularly - I have to look at both of them, 4A and 4B, that you took the brunt of the initial wave of deaths in the period that concerns us. There were two of the Category B deaths, those are Bilodeau and Hoos, which occurred when you were on duty and supervising those wards; and similarly Taylor, Dawson and Turner, and Velasquez, all died in that initial period when you were supervising the ward and Mrs. Johnstone was not on duty?

A That's right.

Q Mrs. Johnstone was on vacation at the end of July as I understand it?

A Yes.

Q Prior to that period beginning in July of 1980, that is to say from February to June of 1980 Miss Coulson, can you give us your best recollection of the number of arrests that occurred in your area of the Hospital while you were on duty?

A Maybe one or two.

Q In a period of five months?

A Yes.

Q And do you recall how many of those were on, for the first few months 5A, and how



BB.2

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many were on 4A/B after April 1st, was either of
them on the cardiology service?

3

4

A. No.

5

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Q. We have heard at a much earlier
stage of this Commission Inquiry, Miss Coulson, that
with respect to resuscitation efforts it has been
the Hospital's experience, consistent with the
experience in other hospitals, that there is about
an 11 per cent success rate on resuscitation efforts.
Of the couple of arrests that you think occurred on
your tour of duty prior to July of 1980, can you tell
me was either of the arrests the subject of a
successful resuscitation effort?

14

A. We were able to transfer the
children to the ICU.

15

16

Q. In both cases?

17

18

19

20

A. The ones I remember, yes.
Q. Let's go then to July of 1980,
by the end of that month you had been called, as I
understand it, to five arrests as the supervisor of
4A and B. Did you observe any pattern in those
arrests?

21

22

23

24

25

A. Yes.

Q. What was that?

A. They always happened during the



BB.3

1

2

night, it seemed to be the earlier part of the night,
and it was always the same nursing team, it was
always on 4A/B.

4

5

Q. And were both of those things
apparent to you by the end of July?

6

7

A. Yes.

8

Q. Did you comment on that to
anybody?

9

A. Yes.

10

Q. To whom?

11

A. To my Supervisor Mrs. Sword, to
Mrs. Pyykkonen who was the Co-ordinator, and to other
people that were in the nursing office that I would
give report to in the morning.

14

15

Q. Do you recall when you commented
to those people?

16

17

A. It would have been during that
week and in the morning.

18

THE COMMISSIONER: I am sorry, which
week is that?

19

20

THE WITNESS: The last week of the
month perhaps.

21

22

THE COMMISSIONER: Last week, this is
July?

23

24

25

THE WITNESS: This was in July I believe



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when they were all happening.

3

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A. Yes.

(2) 10

11

12

Q. I would take it that was later in the 10-day period rather than earlier, because the pattern was not discernible?

13

14

A. Once it seemed to be a pattern, yes, I did speak up to those people.

15

16

A. I couldn't say.

17

18

Q. Did those observations appear to come as news to those people?

19

20

21

22

A. They heard what I said.

23

24

25

Q. What were you saying other than the fact that the deaths were occurring in the middle of the night and in the presence of one team?

A. That is what I was saying.

Q. That is what you were saying, and they heard that?



BB.5

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A. Yes.

3

Q. They didn't make any response

4

or exhibit any reaction to that?

5

A. Not that I remember.

6

Q. Other than reporting the deaths

7

and your observations as to what seemed to be a

8

pattern to the people you have identified, did you

9

have any discussion with anybody at all about the

10

end of July, anyone else, about these patterns that

11

you were seeing?

A. I mentioned it to Lynn Johnstone

12

when she came back from her vacation.

13

Q. What did you say to her?

14

A. I was glad to see her back. I

15

told her that there had been a lot of arrests and

16

the babies had died; that it was always in the same

17

team, and that it always happened in the early part
of the night.

18

Q. You say you were glad to see her

19

back?

20

A. Yes.

21

THE COMMISSIONER: Did you say the

22

early part of the night, is that the early part of
your night?

23

THE WITNESS: At midnight.

24

25



BB.6

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THE COMMISSIONER: Some of us start
a little earlier.

4

THE WITNESS: Yes.

5

MR. LAMEK: Q. Those deaths appear to
have been occurring at about 2 to 3 o'clock in the
morning?

7

A. That's correct.

8

Q. And is that the observation that
you made to Mrs. Johnstone when she returned from
vacation?

10

11

A. Yes.

12

Q. You say you were glad to see her
back. I take it that that reflects some measure of
concern on your part that these deaths were occurring
with a frequency with which they did occur in the
last 10 days?

13

14

15

16

A. Yes.

17

Q. Did you cast around for any
kind of explanation for this rash of deaths that you
had experienced?

18

19

20

A. I felt that something was
happening in surgery.

21

22

Q. Why did you feel something was
happening in surgery?

23

24

25

A. It's the only thing I could



BB.7

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2

think of at the time.

3

4

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Q Did it appear to you that the children who were dying in that period were post-operative patients?

6

7

A It seemed to me that they all had surgery at one point or another.

8

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Q I could go to the charts if it would be of help to you, Miss Coulson, but I tell you that upon my review of them, and excluding Laura Woodcock who died while Mrs. Johnstone was on duty but who was not a post-operative patient; Bilodeau was not a surgical patient, neither was Taylor, and neither was Dawson. Hoos and Turner had had surgery, but of the five that we are talking about - and of course Velasquez had had surgery, no more than 50 per cent were post-operative patients. Did you make any inquiries as to whether these children were post-operative cases?

18

A No, I don't think I did.

19

20

Q Or as to whether if they were post-operative cases how long it had been since their surgery?

21

22

A No, I didn't.

23

24

25

Q Nevertheless it was your impression that you seemed to be losing post-operative



BB.8

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2

patients and you wondered whether perhaps there was something involved in their surgery or post-operative course leading to their arrest?

3

4

A. Those were my thoughts, yes.

5

6

Q. Had you worked on surgical wards prior to this tour of duty dealing with 4A and B?

7

8

A. No, I hadn't.

9

10

Q. In casting around in your mind for explanations for this rash of deaths, did anything else occur to you as a possible explanation?

11

12

A. Not that I can remember.

13

14

Q. Did you consider perhaps that these deaths were occurring as they did in this fairly narrow time frame, about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, may be no more than sheer coincidence?

15

16

A. That certainly went through my mind, yes.

17

18

Q. Did it occur to you the fact that they all seemed to be happening in the presence of the same team suggest that perhaps that team was having a singular run of bad luck?

19

20

A. Yes.

21

22

Q. Well, other than the possibility of coincidence, bad luck to the team, and perhaps some post-surgical implications that you might not be

23

24

25



BB.9

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aware of, nothing else occurred to you at that time
as a possible explanation for the pattern that you
had observed?

4

5

A. That's right.

6

7

Q. During July, do you recall
whether there was any resuscitation attempt on Wards
4A or 4B that were successful?

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A. I don't remember.

Q. All right. You don't remember whether there was one or you don't remember one that was?

A. I don't remember one that was successful.

Q. Did that strike you as unusual?

A. Yes.

THE COMMISSIONER: I'm sorry, what was that, no?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes, all right.

MR. LAMEK: Q. And was that on the basis of the rather limited experience that you have told us about in the prior five months when in a couple of arrests both had been resuscitated and got into the ICU or on a broader past experience over your nursing career?

A. I would say a broader experience.

Q. In the light of your whole experience you regarded the deaths as unusual that of these five arrests none could be resuscitated, is that fair?

A. Yes.



1
CC2 2 Q. All right. Did that concern
3 you?
4 A. It frustrated me.
5 Q. Because of the effort that
6 goes into a resuscitation attempt and the terrible
7 down feeling that must come when it is unsuccessful?
8 A. That's right.
9 Q. Was it any more than
10 frustration?
11 A. Anger.
12 Q. Anger of what?
13 A. Anger at not being able to
14 help these children, save these children.
15 Q. Now, you said that when Mrs.
16 Johnstone returned from vacation you told her about
17 the deaths, you said you were awfully glad to see
18 her back, and you told her about the coincidences
19 that you had observed and did you tell her of the
20 feeling that this was a run of bad luck for that
21 nursing team?
22 A. That's right.
23 Q. Did you tell her of the
24 question in your mind as to whether there might be
25 some post-operative involvement in these deaths?
A. I might have mentioned it to



1
CC3 2 her, I don't remember.

3 Q. All right. Now, as we know,
4 deaths continued during the month of August.
5 Velasquez we know you were on duty for, Monteith
6 you were not, and I need my glasses to see that far
7 chart. Velasquez seems to be the only August
8 death for which you were suprvising the ward.

9 A. Right.

10 Q. Were you aware however that
11 there were further deaths on 4A and B during the
12 month of August?

13 A. I don't remember.

14 Q. You don't recall that?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Were you aware that albeit
17 in reduced numbers through the fall of the year and
18 into the early winter deaths continued to occur on
19 4A and 4B?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And did you continue to
22 believe that or did you continue to be aware that
23 those deaths apparently were occurring in the
24 presence of the same nursing team?

25 A. I think that was a question
I asked.



CC4

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Q. Of whom did you ask the question?

A. Probably Lynn.

Q. And what were you told?

A. I think some were and some weren't.

Q. All right. Were you aware that many of the deaths occurred again in the middle of the night, although in a rather later time band, more like four o'clock area of the night?

A. That was -- when are you referring to?

Q. I am now looking at the fall and the early winter, September, October, November and into December.

A. Yes.

Q. All right. Did you continue to believe that to the extent deaths were occurring within a narrow time band in the night that it was coincidence?

A. It was past coincidence.

Q. At what point did it become in your mind past coincidence?

A. When it seemed to start to have another run of arrests.



CC5

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Q. Now, we know that January was a month in which there were several arrests.

A. Yes.

Q. Is that the time when you began to doubt whether this could be merely coincidence?

A. Yes, it was in January.

THE COMMISSIONER: I'm sorry?

THE WITNESS: December, January.

THE COMMISSIONER: I don't think that's right. It is December.

THE COMMISSIONER: December, January.

MR. LAMEK: I'm sorry, December there were five arrests, that's right.

THE COMMISSIONER: Estrella is the only death in January.

MR. LAMEK: Yes. December was the month I believe when there were five deaths.

A. Yes, December.

Q. It was in December then you began to doubt whether coincidence could explain the deaths that were occurring on the ward?

A. Well, it would seem to be starting over again.

Q. Yes. Did you continue to



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believe that this was no more than a run of very
bad luck for that one nursing team?

A. I started to believe that.

Q. You started to believe that?

A. Well, when the arrests
started happening again.

Q. In December?

A. Yes.

Q. You thought the bad luck was
back again on that team?

A. Yes.

Q. Let me understand what your
view was of it then, Miss Coulson. In December when
there was a crop of arrests again, you believed
once again that the nursing team - that was the
Phyllis Trayner team?

A. Yes.

Q. -- was having another run
of terribly bad luck but you were no longer able to
believe that it was merely coincidence?

A. Once it had happened and it
seemed to be getting into a pattern.

Q. Yes.

A. That to me didn't seem that
it could be coincidence.



1
CC7 2 Q. Well, if it were not
3 coincidence, did you cast around in your mind for
4 some other possible explanation?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Did you produce any other
7 possible explanations, whether you thought them to
8 be reasonable, acceptable, probable or not, what
9 did you canvass as the possibilities that could
10 explain this resurgence of deaths that you could no
longer attribute to coincidence?

11 A. That there was something
12 wrong with the IV solutions or various aspects of
13 that kind of care. I had talked to doctors and to
14 some of the people in the nursing office and rejected
most of the ideas that I had thought of.

15 Q. Do you recall to which doctors
16 you had spoken? Can we look back, say, from December
17 31st, the end of the year, just picking that as a
18 date, and I don't hold you to a conversation on any
19 particular date I promise you.

20 A. Okay, because I can't tell
21 dates. I know I had spoken to Colin Costigan and
I had spoken to Michael Schaffer.

22 Q. What did you say to them?

23 A. That I was concerned about the
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arrests and what were their theories and had been assured by both of them that they were being looked into.

Q. Were you told what was being done to look into the deaths and the arrests and their cause?

A. I don't remember.

Q. All right. Did you raise with them the possible explanations that were occurring to you? I think you suggested that one possibility that occurred to you was there might be something wrong with IV solutions or something of that sort.

A. Yes.

Q. And what was there response to those suggestions?

A. That didn't seem to be the reason.

Q. I take it it would be the most enormous bad luck if indeed there were something wrong with the IV solutions that they only happened to be picked up and used in the presence of one nursing team?

A. That's right, it would have happened throughout the Hospital.

Q. That again would have been a



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coincidence that defied credibility I take it?

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A. That's right.

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Q. Credulity. You say you spoke

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to people in the nursing office as well, again, I

6

take it trying to seek an explanation for the

7

phenomenon that you were observing?

8

A. That's right.

9

Q. Did you get any comfort, any
help, any explanation there?

10

A. No.

11

Q. All right. Other than

12

raising, as you have told me, with Dr. Costigan and

13

others and the nursing office the concerns that you

14

had which surfaced again in December of the year, did

15

you discuss with anyone else in the Hospital your

16

concern that these deaths could no longer be explained
as sheer coincidence?

17

A. Lynn Johnstone.

18

Q. When was that?

19

A. It must have been in December.

20

Q. And do you recall what was
said in that conversation?

21

A. No, I don't.

22

Q. All right. But you do have a

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recollection of raising with her your concern? --

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A. Yes.

Q. -- that this was more than coincidence?

A. I remember raising the concern but I do not remember the conversation.

Q. Did you at any time, Miss Coulson, prior to late March of 1981 entertain the thought that somebody might be causing the deaths by accident or otherwise?

A. That thought did enter my mind.

Q. Can you tell me when?

A. I would have to say in the early part of March, about the second week.

Q. All right.

A. Because there were more arrests happening.

Q. Yes. Did you convey that concern to anybody?

A. I don't remember.

Q. You have no recollection of talking to anyone in the nursing office or to any physician about that possible explanation?

A. I don't remember.

Q. All right. Did you make any



Coulson
dr.ex. (Lamek)

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effort, Miss Coulson, to keep a closer eye on what was going on in the ward from and after December?

A. I would always make my rounds there first and pop back a couple of times during the night again to just be sure that everything was stable.

Q. Did you entertain any concerns about the quality of nursing care that was being provided on those wards?

A. I had no concerns about the quality of care.

Q. It did not occur to you that that might in some way be related to the deaths?

A. No, I felt they were giving good care.



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Q. Did the possibility occur to you that perhaps the nurses on the one team which seemed to be present on so many of these occasions was missing or failing to observe something which might have alerted them to developing problems in time to reverse them? Did that occur to you?

A. I don't think so.

Q. All right.

Was it any part of your purpose in going to the ward first and in popping back there as you have told us during the course of your shift, was it any part of your purpose to see if you could detect developing problems in time to be able to reverse them?

A. Yes.

Q. I take it that - well, you have told me that at no time prior to the end of March, the middle of March I think you said, did you entertain the thought that somebody by accident or otherwise might be causing these deaths on Wards 4A and B?

Did anybody raise that thought with you prior to the middle of March, 1981?

A. You mean asked me?

Q. If you thought that that was



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a possibility?

A. I don't think so, no. I don't remember.

THE COMMISSIOER: I am getting a little confused. It seems to me you said after the spate of deaths in March it did occur to you that someone was causing the deaths. I have that note but I am wrong, am I?

THE WITNESS: That some thing was causing --

THE COMMISSIONER: That some thing? Oh, I see. Some thing was causing... Yes, all right.

MR. LAMEK: Q. Miss Coulson, in the period prior to late March 1981 were there any deaths which on the basis of the information that you had about the children which surprised you or which you would regard as unexpected?

A. Would you repeat that, please?

Q. Were there any of the deaths that occurred which you regarded as surprising or unexpected when they occurred in light of what you knew about the child?

A. Yes. Quite often I would have no idea who had arrested.

Q. When you would hear a Code 25



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called for Ward 4A and 4B you would have no idea for whom it was being called?

A. That is right. I would have no idea.

Q. Does that mean that on your tour of the ward, that on your review of the tour end reports, there would be no child who struck you as so sick he seemed to be in imminent danger of arresting?

A. That is right.

Q. All right.

Were you aware of whether staff in the Hospital on wards other than 4A and B had observed the pattern of arrests on those wards that you have described?

A. Yes.

Q. How were you aware of that?

A. Because different nurses would say was it the same team or there was an arrest tonight; was it the same team that was on?

Q. Did you at some time prior to March 22nd, 1981, and that was the morning upon which Justin Cook died, did you at some time prior to March 22, 1981 learn that a high digoxin concentration had been measured in a postmortem sample from



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Janice Estrella?

A. Before the 22nd?

Q. Yes.

A. I don't think so. I can't
remember that.

Q. Do you recall when you first
did learn of that?

A. No, I don't recall when I heard.

Q. It was after the death of
Justin Cook I take it from what you said?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you at some time prior to
March 22nd learn that high digoxin concentrations
had been measured in both antemortem and postmortem
samples drawn from Kevin Pacsai?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you learn that?

A. Just after Allana Miller had
arrested or after she had died.

Q. On the morning of Friday the
21st?

A. Yes.

Q. Sorry, Saturday the 21st.

A. Saturday.

Q. Yes. Can you tell me how you



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acquired that information?

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Q. Was that the extent of what Miss Nelles said on that occasion?

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A. Susan Nelles had - was telling Lynn Johnstone and I and I think Phyllis Turner - Phyllis Trayner was there - and she was annoyed that Liz Radojewski had called her at home in Belleville to tell her that Pacsai had had a high digoxin level and that she had been the last person to sign for the digoxin dose, and that there was a potential inquest.

Q. Was that the extent of what Miss Nelles said on that occasion?

A. That is what I remember.

Q. All right. What was your reaction to the news that Pacsai had had a high digoxin level?

A. I was concerned.

Q. You have told us, and I think you confirmed to the Commissioner a few minutes ago that from about the middle of March you were concerned that some thing was causing the deaths of these children.

Against that background did you attach any particular significance to a high digoxin level in Kevin Pacsai?

A. Not at that time.



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Q. It did not occur to you at that time that high digoxin levels might be the some thing that was involved in these deaths?

A. I don't think I thought of it at that time.

Q. All right. Did you learn what the concentrations were in Pacsai's samples at that time?

A. Not at that time, no.

Q. Did you make any enquiry?

MR. PERCIVAL: Mr. Commissioner, there is some consideration back here. We had heard the same way you had heard, someone, and I am not sure whether it was a mistake on the part of the witness but I am satisfied at least from the consensus back here that she indicated someone, in the first two weeks of March, and we took it down the same way you did, sir.

Perhaps we can get that clarified.

MR. LAMEK: Q. Maybe we can go back. I think the question that I had asked you, Miss Coulson, was whether it had occurred to you prior to the end of March or the latter part of March of 1981 that someone, and I think that was the word I used --



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A. Yes.

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Q. -- someone whether accidentally
or in any other way was perhaps causing the deaths
of these children on Wards 4A and B. I confess I
thought you had said ~~yes to~~ that question as from
about the middle of March.

8

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Maybe I should ask the question all
over again and we can answer it all over again.

10

A. Yes.

11

12

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Q. Had that thought occurred to
you that someone, in some way or another, might be
causing those deaths, occurred to you at any time
before the latter part of March?

14

15

A. I would have to say that some
thing was happening. I couldn't say that some one.

16

17

Q. Okay. It occurred to you
that some thing was happening down there; you didn't
know what?

18

19

A. That is right.

20

21

Q. You couldn't identify what?

22

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A. That is right. I couldn't
put my finger on it.

Q. And that thought came to you
about the middle of March after the number of arrests
at the beginning of March?



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A. Yes.

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Q. When you say some thing, can you give me any suggestion of a thing that can take effect without some human assistance?

6

A. No.

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Q. I want to be clear but I ~~do~~ want to be fair.

9

A. Yes.

10

11

Q. Do I put it fairly, Miss Coulson, if I say that as far as you cared or dared to carry your thinking at that time, it was some thing?

12

A. Yes.

13

14

Q. But if really pressed you would have to say that means probably some one.

15

A. It looks that way, yes.

16

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Q. But when you learned of the Pacsai elevated digoxin concentrations following the death of Allana Miller on the morning of March 21st, it did not occur to you that that might be the some thing and perhaps the some one that may have caused other deaths?

21

22

A. The fact may have crossed my mind, but I don't remember. --

23

Q. Okay.

24

A. -- spending time with it.

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Q. I think I asked you whether
you learned of the particular concentrations that
had been recorded at that time?

5

A. Not at that time.

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Q. You said no, and I ask you if
you made any enquiry?

8

A. Yes, but nobody knew what it
was.

9

10

Q. Of whom did you enquire?

11

A. The nurses that were telling -
telling me.

12

13

Q. You didn't address any enquiry
to anyone in the nursing office or to any physician?

14

A. That is right.

15

16

17

Q. Did you discuss your concerns
over that basic information about the Pacsai levels,
about the Pacsai concentration with anybody,
Mrs. Johnstone, for example?

18

A. At that time?

19

Q. At that time.

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A. No.

21

Q. Or with anybody else?

22

A. No.

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Q. Let's go then to the night of
March 21-22, the night that Justin Cook died. You

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were on duty?

A. Yes.

Q. And you came on duty at 11:00,
11:15 in the normal way?

A. That is right.

Q. Were you present at report for
Mrs. Ross that night?

A. She called Mrs. Johnstone into
the other room.

Q. All right. And they had a
private conversation?

A. They had a private conversation.

Q. Did you ever learn what was said
in the course of that conversation?

A. Yes.

Q. When?

A. Later on before we made rounds,
Mrs. Johnstone told me what Mrs. Ross had said and
showed me a memo.

Q. All right. Not so much for
the truth of it but for the purpose of establishing
what information you had at that time, what did
Mrs. Johnstone tell you?

A. She told me that - well, we
knew that the digoxin had been locked up.



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Q. Yes.

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A. And that the memo had said that there were - there had been a meeting with Dr. Carver and I can't remember who else.

6

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Q. Would it assist you to see the memorandum?

8

A. Yes, it would.

9

10

Q. Let me see if I can find it for you.

11

MS. THOMSON: 357.

12

MR. LAMEK: I wonder if we could have that, Mr. Registrar, please? Exhibit 357.

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Q. Our No. 357 is two memoranda. First a memorandum from Mrs. Ross to Miss Geiger reporting on the direction as to digitalis preparations.

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17

18

Is that the memorandum to which you refer or is it the first one in the exhibit which is a memorandum from Lynn Johnstone to Mary Sword?

19

20

A. I did not see this one. I saw the second.

21

Q. You didn't see the first one?

22

A. No.

23

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Q. So the memorandum you are referring to is the one that records the order about



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the locking up of digoxin?

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A. That is right.

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Q. Whatever information was
given to you by Mrs. Johnstone that she had derived,
she said, from Mrs. Ross.

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A. That there had been a problem
with the digoxin, that the pharmacy was going to
reissue it the next morning and that Dr. Mounstephen
and Costigan had gone around and taken all the
ampules of digoxin from the cart.

11

Q. All right.

12

13

A. And from the medication cup-
boards, and it seemed hush hush.

14

15

16

Q. Did she tell you in particular
that night that several babies that have arrested
have apparently had high digoxin levels?

17

A. I don't remember.

18

19

Q. You don't recall?

20

A. No.

21

Q. Do you recall getting that
information from Mrs. Johnstone at any time?

22

A. No, I don't remember.

23

Q. You were told about the locking
up of the digoxin and the taking of the inventory
by Costigan and Mounstephen and so on?

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A. Yes.

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Q. What was your reaction to that information?

5

A. Something is going on.

6

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Q. Okay. Did you take your thinking any further than that?

8

A. Well, I knew Pacsai had a high dig. level.

9

10

Q. Yes.

11

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A. And their locking up the dig., and maybe that could be an explanation for what has been happening.

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Q. Is it fair to say then that although you had not considered digoxin and high levels as an explanation merely upon learning of the Pacsai elevated concentration, when that was put together with the news that digoxin had been locked up it did then occur to you that digoxin might be the thread that ran through these deaths?

19

A. Yes.

20

Q. All right.

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Now that having occurred to you as the some thing, did that not bring you face to face with the some one possibility because digoxin doesn't find its way on its own into babies; is that fair?



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A. That's fair.

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Q. Okay. Did that occur to you
that evening when you came on duty and received that
news?

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A. No. I was more concerned
with the actual digoxin or maybe the actual digoxin
concentration or the fact that maybe there had been
an overdose, an accidental overdose --

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Q. Yes.

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A. Or drug error.

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Q. Did it occur to you perhaps that there had been a series of accidental drug overdoses or drug errors that might account for a number of the deaths that you had seen?

A. Did I -- ?

Q. Did that possibility occur to you that night?

A. I think so, yes.

Q. Did you discuss the matter with Mrs. Johnstone that night?

A. We talked about it but not for any great length, we had to go on our rounds.

Q. Did you share with Mrs. Johnstone the concern that you now had that digoxin might indeed be involved in the deaths that you had been seeing on that ward?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Do you recall whether she expressed such a thought to you?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Now, when you did your rounds in your area of the Hospital that night did you find any ward where the digoxin was not locked up by the time you got there?

A. The digoxin was locked up on all



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the medical floors.

Q. Locked up in all of them by the time you arrived?

A. Yes.

Q. You were not supervising 4A/B that night?

A. No.

Q. Did you go up to 4A/B at all during that shift?

A. Yes.

Q. How did that come about?

A. Mrs. Johnstone called me about 4 o'clock in the morning, I was on Psychiatry.

Q. What floor is that?

A. 5E.

Q. 5E, right.

A. I received a call from Mrs. Johnstone asking me to come down to 4A. I asked her if it was that sick baby that - had anybody arrested, and she said no. I said, is it that sick baby, and she said yes, I need you down here.

Q. By that sick baby, whom did you mean?

A. Justin Cook.

Q. Had you and Mrs. Johnstone



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discussed earlier in the evening the children on 4A?

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A. Yes, we had.

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Q. And therefore when you said is

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it that sick baby she knew who you meant?

6

A. Yes.

7

Q. That you say was about 4 o'clock

8

in the morning?

9

A. Yes.

10

Q. Did you then go to Ward 4A?

11

A. Yes.

12

Q. What did you find when you got

there?

13

A. Mrs. Johnstone was at the desk

14

and had just put a call in for - she had put an urgent

15

call in for the anaesthetist, and together we went

16

into 418 and the crash cart was in there, it had not

17

been opened or disturbed at all. Dr. Jedeikin was

18

there and Susan Nelles and Phyllis Trayner were there,

and the baby was in a stork bed.

19

Q. I am sorry, in a --

20

A. A stork bed, a small bed.

21

Q. That is a small crib?

22

A. Yes.

23

Q. Do you recall whether there was

anyone else in the room, and in particular did anyone

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else appear to be caring for any of the other

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children in the room?

4

A. I don't remember.

5

Q. And what then happened?

6

A. The anaesthetist came and he

7

asked me for the endotracheal tube, I gave him the

8

endotracheal tube, and the child arrested when he

9

intubated the baby and a 25 call then was put in , and

the CPR at that point had commenced.

10

Q. And who was doing the CPR?

11

A. Susan was doing the - Susan was.

12

Q. Susan Nelles?

13

A. Yes.

14

Q. And did the arrest team arrive?

15

A. Yes.

16

Q. And the resuscitation effort

took its course?

17

A. Yes.

18

Q. Do you recall anything unusual,

19

or anything that now causes you any question or

20

concern about the cause of that resuscitation?

21

A. I had left and come back. I

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had to go and do some other things, and I came back

23

and arrangements had been made for the child to go

24

to ICU.

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EE.5

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Q. Was that before the arrest?

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A. Before the arrest, yes. Phyllis

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Trayner kept saying let's get the baby down to ICU.

5

Q. When was she saying that?

6

A. During the arrest.

7

Q. During the resuscitation effort?

8

A. Yes.

(2)

9

Q. Is it usual to move a child to
the ICU during a resuscitation effort?

10

A. Not usually, sometimes on other

11

floors we have bagged a baby or a child to take them
down, but not at this point.

12

13

Q. Did that strike you as unusual
in any way?

14

A. Well, it did seem unusual, yes.

15

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Q. That the suggestion would be
made to move the child at that time?

17

A. Yes.

18

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Q. Was there anything else that
struck you as unusual, or that you now question?

20

A. No, I don't think so, no.

21

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Q. Now Mrs. Johnstone has told us
that she left the resuscitation effort before the
child was pronounced dead.

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A. Yes.

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Q She had staffing requirements to do?

A Yes.

Q Did you stay until the resuscitation effort was over?

A When I returned to the floor I stayed and Mrs. Johnstone went back to the office.

Q And did you subsequently advise her that the child had died?

A Yes, I telephoned her.

Q Were you aware Miss Coulson that blood was drawn from Justin Cook after he had been pronounced dead.

Q No.

Q After he had been pronounced dead, which was at 4:56 in the morning, did you at any time during the balance of the shift have any conversation or discussion with any member of the Trayner team?

A Yes, I did.

Q How did that come about?

A I had left 4A to go down to pick up another tray for the arrest cart, and I came back up and I went into 418 and Susan Nelles was bathing Justin Cook, and Mrs. Christie was in the room at the time and we had a conversation. Do you



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want me to tell you what it was?

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Q. Yes, please.

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THE COMMISSIONER: I am not sure who
it is you had the conversation with?

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THE WITNESS: Susan Nelles, and
Mrs. Christie was in the background.

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MR. LAMEK: Q. Did she participate in
the conversation?

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A. Other than handing us something
for the baby to put on that was nicer than the one
we were going to put on. Susan was - she told me
that the baby had come from a small town outside of
Owen Sound and seemed frustrated that the child - it
had taken so long to get the child down to Sick
Children's. The baby had had a heart murmur that
had been picked up - it had not been picked up in
Owen Sound until he was over two months of age and
she was quite concerned about that and said this
always happened.

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Q. Did she appear to be angry
about that, frustrated that the child had not been
sent to the Hospital at an earlier stage?

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A. She seemed frustrated.

Q. Do you recall anything else in
the course of the conversation?



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A. She asked me where I had been that night and I told her I had been on the fifth floor.

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Q. What do you mean "where you had been that night", she was asking you to give a whole story of the evening, was she?

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A. No. It was just a matter of where was I this time when there had been an arrest, I could be anywhere from the 9th floor, the 8th floor, wherever, and I would come to answer the Code.

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Q. You had been on duty the night before the Miller arrest, had you not?

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A. That's right.

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Q. Where had you been when that arrest was called?

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A. On the ninth floor.

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Q. And Miss Nelles asked you where you were on this occasion when the arrest was called?

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A. That's right.

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Q. And you had been on the fifth floor I take it?

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A. That's right.

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Q. Indeed you had been called before the arrest occurred?

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A. Yes, and I had told her that.

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Q Anything else in the course of that conversation?

A I said to her, I will make the bed; she had finished bathing the baby and was holding Justin and she said, "Here, you hold him", and I said, "No, you hold him and I will make the bed", and we laughed because it was a bigger bed and I was taller than Susan.

Q You were not putting him back into the stork bed?

A No, we had a large crib at this point and the parents were coming in. That is when Mrs. Christie gave us a comforter and a nicer gown for him. Then I left the room to go out to see how Phyllis and Bertha were doing, they were out at the desk.

Q Just before we get to Nurse Trayner and Nurse Bell; how did Miss Nelles appear to you, did she appear to be concerned, upset, distressed about the death, what?

A Concerned.

Q Did she appear distressed at all?

A She had been frustrated as I said.

Q Yes.



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A. She was not crying, but she was concerned.

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Q. Did she mention to you in the course of your conversation with her that blood had been drawn from Justin Cook after he had been pronounced dead?

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A. No.

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Q. Maybe we can follow you out to your conversation with Nurses Trayner and Bell after the break, Mr. Commissioner?

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes. All right. I was going to mention a matter of great importance, somebody else may not think so. I have been having terrible trouble with the elevators here because I think this building works on the half hour. I was wondering if we might change our whole lives by breaking at quarter to one and coming back at quarter past two and we will adjust the breaks accordingly. I know this is a momentous decision you have to make, so I will ask you, if nobody has an objection to that we will put it into effect tomorrow, if anybody has any objection we will put it to a vote.

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MR. TOBIAS: Perhaps we should have written argument, Mr. Commissioner?

THE COMMISSIONER: Maybe we should.



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MR. LAMEK: A stated case perhaps.

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THE COMMISSIONER: I don't know if

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anybody else has had the same trouble I have had with

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the elevators. I know at quarter to one when we did

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it I think it was Thursday the elevator came right

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away and whisked me right down. So think about it

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and we will decide in 20 minutes.

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--- Short recess.

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--- on resuming.

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THE COMMISSIONER: First of all, has anyone any objection to the proposed change of hours?

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MR. PERCIVAL: I think we have all agreed to waive our rights to appeal.

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THE COMMISSIONER: Good, and I will not state a case. However, it won't make any difference in the morning, starting in the morning, except that we will have our break at or close to 11:15 and we will rise at a quarter to one and come back at a quarter past two, have a break then at 3:15 and carry on to the end of the day as before.

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If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. If the elevators -- try not to tell anybody else in this building because they will no doubt change the hours of lunch for all the employees.

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All right now, Mr. Lamek.

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MR. LAMEK: Thank you, sir.

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Q. Miss Coulson, you have just told us of the conversation that you had with Miss Nelles in Room 418 when she was bathing Cook after his death. Then you said you went out to the nursing station.

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A. Yes.

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Q. Can you tell me whom you encountered there and what was said?

A. I went to the back of the nurses' station and Phyllis Trayner and Bertha Bell were sitting there having a coffee and I asked them if there was anything that they needed or wanted, were they okay, and they were fine. I went back in to say goodbye to Susan and that's when she told me that Dr. Jedeikin had come up to her and said I just want you to know the baby had excellent care, and I said to her that's very nice to hear and she said yes.

Q. Okay. You have just told us the extent of the conversation you had with Nurses Trayner and Bell at the back of the nursing station --

THE COMMISSIONER: Just a minute, I must have missed something. This was on the morning of the 22nd, is that it?

THE WITNESS: The Sunday morning.

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

MR. LAMEK: Some time between five o'clock when the baby was pronounced dead and seven o'clock when the shift ended.

Q. But I would take it closer to five than to seven?



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A. Oh, it was just after five,

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yes.

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Q. Yes. So, I take it what Miss

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Nelles is doing is preparing the baby's body to take

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down to see the parents and go to the morgue?

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A. Yes, the parents were coming

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in.

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Q. Yes. And what was your

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impression, please, of Nurses Trayner and Bell? Did

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they appear to be upset, stressed and concerned about
this death?

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A. They were upset. They had had

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a cigarette and coffee and were --

14

Q. Relatively calm?

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A. Relatively calm, yes.

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Q. All right. Now you went off

duty that morning, seven, seven-thirty?

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A. About seven-thirty, a quarter

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to eight.

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Q. And the balance of the shift,

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did anything else occur that in any way related to

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the Cook death and the incidents of that night?

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A. Not that I remember.

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Q. Did you have any conversation

with Mrs. Johnstone following the Cook death in the

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course of the balance of that shift?

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A. No. I had another emergency

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to deal with and I didn't see Lynn.

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Q. Now, were you on duty Sunday

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night, the night of the 22nd to the 23rd?

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A. Yes, I was.

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Q. Were you also on duty on the

Monday night, the 23rd/24th?

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A. Yes, I was.

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Q. Were you supervising Wards 4A

11

and B on those two nights?

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A. No.

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Q. Who was?

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A. To the best of my recol-

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lection Miss Sword was responsible for the general
supervision of the floor.

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Q. When you came on duty on

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Sunday night, I take it you became aware that the

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Trayner team was not working that night, although

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it had been scheduled to do so?

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A. That's right.

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Q. Did you ask why or were you

told why?

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A. The reason was given that

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they had been under a lot of stress.

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Q. Is that an explanation that
satisfied you?

A. No.

Q. Did you have your own thoughts
as to the reason for them not being there?

A. Not that I really -- not that
I remember.

Q. Well, why were you dis-
satisfied with the explanation that was given to you?

A. Well, the stress, there was
stress on the other team as well. To me, if I had
been told not to come in to work that would have
caused more stress for me.

Q. All right. Did you in your
own mind link the absence of the Trayner team that
night with the thoughts that you had had on the
Saturday night about the possible digoxin involvement
in the deaths?

A. To the Trayner team?

Q. Yes.

A. No.

Q. You did not?

A. No.

Q. You were aware that super-
visors were on the wards?



Coulson
dr.ex. (Lamek)

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A. Yes. There were relief

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nurses there.

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Q. And that they were overseeing

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drug administrations?

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A. Yes.

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Q. Did you ask why that was or

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were you told why that was happening?

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A. We were told that it was to

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double-check to make sure that everything was given
accordingly.

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Q. Did that cause you any

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concern as to whether things might not have been

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given properly and accordingly on previous occasions?

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A. It did raise some concern,

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yes.

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Q. Did you express those con-

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cerns to anybody on the Sunday night?

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A. No.

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Q. Or on that shift that started

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on the Sunday night?

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A. No.

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Q. Did you become aware on the

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Sunday night that police officers had been in the
Hospital?

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A. Not on Sunday night.

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Q. Did you learn that on Monday

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night?

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A. I knew either early Monday

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morning around eight o'clock or seven-thirty, it

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was either Monday morning or Tuesday morning, I can't

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be certain.

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Q. Either Monday morning when

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you went off shift but not Tuesday night when you

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A. I knew either Monday morning

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when I went off or Tuesday morning when I went off.

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Q. Okay, but not Monday night

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when you came on?

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A. No.

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Q. All right. You are sure that

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that is not when you learned of it?

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A. No, I learned about it in the

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morning.

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Q. All right. And did you

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understand that the police officers were in the

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Hospital investigating deaths?

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A. I heard Homicide had been

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called in, yes.

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Q. From whom did you learn that?

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A. From Muriel Richardson.



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Q. Who was Muriel Richardson?

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A. She was one of the coordinators.

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Q. The Area Coordinators?

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A. Yes.

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Q. All right. Did that information cause you concern?

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A. Yes.

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Q. Did that give rise to any suspicion that indeed digoxin may have been involved in the deaths, together with all the other information that you acquired over the past 48 hours?

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A. Yes.

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Q. And did you at that time begin to entertain the thought that perhaps some one might now be involved in the administration of digoxin causing death?

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A. Yes.

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Q. Is that the first time that that thought had occurred to you?

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A. It occurred to me on Tuesday night.

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Q. By that time you knew of the high Pacsai level, you learned that on the Friday morning -- I'm sorry, the Saturday morning?

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A. The Saturday morning.



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Q. You knew of the locking-up of digoxin, you knew that on Saturday evening. You knew that the Trayner team had not come on for scheduled shift on Sunday, you knew that supervisors were on the wards overseeing the administration of drugs and you knew that Homicide officers were in the Hospital and at that point you began to entertain the thought that perhaps somebody had been administering digoxin to these infants.

A. Yes.

Q. When you entertained that thought, did you focus solely upon the most recent of the deaths, Cook, or did you extend your thoughts backward over the period of time back even to the summer?

A. I looked at it collectively.

Q. Over the whole period?

A. Yes.

Q. Did it occur to you at that time that that was a possible explanation for the whole sequence of increased mortality rate?

A. Yes.

Q. Back from July?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, prior to Tuesday evening



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when you came on duty did you discuss any of these matters or any concerns that you had with anybody at or from the Hospital?

A. No.

Q. And we know on Tuesday evening when you came on duty that Mrs. Johnstone was returning from two days off.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you discuss the situation that had by now developed and the concerns that you had by now developed with her?

A. Yes.

Q. When and where did that conversation take place?

A. It took place on the Tuesday, Tuesday night, it would be a quarter to one, around that time, and it was in the hall outside of Nursing Education.

Q. Is that on the fourth floor?

A. The fourth floor just before you go through the doors to 4C/D.

Q. Yes.

A. And Mrs. Johnstone and I were standing there talking and I said to her that Homicide had been called in and I said does this mean



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murder and we were both shaking and I said that looks
as if it points to one of two people.

Q. Do you recall what Mrs.
Johnstone said?

A. She said one person and I
said another.

Q. All right. What was your
basis -- did you have any basis for naming the person
that you did identify?

A. The other person had not been
there for a couple of deaths that I knew about.

Q. All right. Well, let me ask
you the blunt question and you might take your time
about answering this one because someone may have
something to say about it. Can you tell me please
who were the people that you and Mrs. Johnstone
respectively identified as the person that each of
you thought might be involved in those deaths?

MS. FORSTER: Mr. Commissioner.

THE COMMISSIONER: Oh, sorry, yes.

MS. FORSTER: I think we are back to
the same old issue. This witness hasn't really
established any basis for saying that she suspected
anyone other than presence or absence.

THE COMMISSIONER: Well, I know, and



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I understand that, but this is where I get trapped every time because, well, for the first issue it is no help at all; on the second issue, naming the police which we are now doing, if as certainly it would appear that there were suspicions of more than one person then the police will take the position that they should have been told, at least I assume that is the position they will take, and that's why the last time we went through this I had to reverse myself.

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MS. FORSTER: Sir, I understand the concern and the relevance to Phase II, but as I indicated last time, I think that probably can be gotten around if the witness states whether or not she ever told or relayed the conversation to the police, and either she did or she didn't.

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My concern is, if we have evidence on what everybody has said as to who they suspected or who they didn't, the prejudicial effect is incredible, whereas, in Phase II aren't we really concerned with what they knew or what they didn't know and whether a person conveyed it to the police?

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With respect, I don't see how the relevance of who they actually suspected and the basis



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for it really even assists in Phase II, it is more whether or not a basis has been made.

THE COMMISSIONER: Well, there seems to have been a basis for it, she did indicate that her opinion was based upon the presence of the one person at I guess some of these deaths.

Please don't tell me, don't mention any names, but did you not say your opinion was based upon the fact that the person for whom you did not suspect had not been present, isn't that what I understood you to say?

THE WITNESS: The person that I suspected was one and Lynn Johnstone suspected another and my counterreaction was, she wasn't there for, and I said a child's name.

THE COMMISSIONER: There is a basis for it, there is a basis for it. I don't know, Mr. Lamek, I don't know whether you would be satisfied if you merely mentioned -- well, I take it, Mr. Percival, you have some views on it.

MR. PERCIVAL: Mr. Commissioner, contrary to my position last week, I think with this particular witness on the basis of the examination in chief heretofore the precise basis for her comments has now been laid and I think with Mrs. Johnstone



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the difficulty was that we didn't have that sort of
buildup, if I may say, in relation to the evidence.
So, there is certainly adequate consideration given
by the witness long before she has said that she
uttered this, and I say in this particular case it
should be given.

THE COMMISSIONER: That's my problem,
Miss Forster.

Yes, Miss McIntyre?



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MS. McINTYRE: Mr. Commissioner,
it seems to me from listening to the evidence that
while a basis may be established for who this witness
says she thought it wasn't, there has been no basis
established for who she thought it was.

THE COMMISSIONER: Well, that well
may be, but there is some basis for it. But it is
really not the first issue that is concerning me;
it is the second issue. It is the second issue;
that is the police investigation that we are now
taking because these witnesses are now here for the
first and last time.

Yes, Mr. Hunt? What did you wish?

MR. HUNT: Mr. Commissioner, as this
matter comes up every time my friends focus on the
prejudicial aspect even in the face of it being put
to them that this relates to the second aspect, the
police investigation.

Susan Nelles was charged by the
police. She was prosecuted by the Crown and you are
going to investigate their conduct entirely.

If somebody suspected one or both of
those people before charges were laid, then that is
relevant to the Crown and to the police, and to dance
around suggesting that there are ways that we can get



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around this, that may be fine from my friends' point of view, but certainly not from mine or my friend Mr. Percival's point of view.

And whether or not there is a basis in my submission if this witness had that conversation the night before charges were laid, then it is important from the point of view of my clients and I understand Mr. Percival's position, from the point of view of his, that it come out.

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Commissioner, if I might respond to Mr. Hunt's comments, his argument for relevancy on that basis troubles me because he assumes that a person's state of mind prior to laying of the charges is relevant to the conduct of the police.

Now if the police had gone in, had made it known generally that they were conducting an investigation and made it known that they were soliciting from people their --

THE COMMISSIONER: No, but that's argument.

MR. BROWN: Well, no, I think, sir, with respect it goes beyond argument because if the police make no effort prior to laying the charges to



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solicit from people their understanding of events,
I fail to see how it is relevant that a person had
a state of knowledge before the charges were laid.

There was no effort to solicit that.
How does it then become relevant to the police to
say, oh, well, she should have told us when they made
no effort to tell people, "Come to us and tell us".

THE COMMISSIONER: I say that is
argument.

You can only say that the police should
have gone out and should have sought this information.
They should have asked everybody is there any reason
why we should not, let us say, charge your client or
whatever it is.

Perhaps they should do that, and you
can put that in argument, I don't know, but the
problem here is that there was a conversation that
took place on the Tuesday night between two super-
visors who were familiar with the circumstances in
which they expressed apparently views on different
people, and the police make or try to make whatever
they can out of that, the fact - if it was, and in
fact this information was not passed on to the police.
Maybe it was passed on to the police --

MR. BROWN: Well, as I say, sir, I



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have trouble with the argument of relevancy.

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THE COMMISSIONER: Yes.

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MR. BROWN: Because if the police
didn't make it known that they wanted information
I fail to see how information at a particular date
is relevant to their investigation.

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THE COMMISSIONER: Yes. All right.

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MR. BROWN: Thank you.

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THE COMMISSIONER: And you asked
the question, Mr. Lamek - everybody expressed a view
as to whether it is proper or not. Do you want to
say anything?

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MR. LAMEK: Mr. Commissioner, I hope
the fact that I asked it suggests that I think it
to be a proper question. Perhaps I can just ask
one other by way of further foundation for this thing.

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Q. Miss Coulson, you have told us
that some time on the Tuesday, perhaps you had heard
on Tuesday morning which you say the police, the
homicide officers were in - some time on the Tuesday
with all of the information that had come to you over
the course of the preceding 48 or 72 hours, the
possibility had to be faced by you that there may
have been foul play on that ward.

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Do I have it fairly so far?

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A. Yes.

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A. Looking at it collectively.

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A. Yes.

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A. Yes.

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Q. And did you find a link that appeared to you to be a constant in those deaths?

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A. Yes.

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Q. And was that the person whom you identified as the person whom you thought might be involved?

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A. Yes.

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Q. Whom did you think might be involved? Whom did you say to Mrs. Johnstone you thought might be involved on that basis?

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A. Can I answer it now? Phyllis Trayner.

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Q. Did Mrs. Johnstone agree with you?

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A. No, she said Susan Nelles.

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Q. And your response to her suggestion was what?

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A. Susan wasn't there when Lombardo died.

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Q. Do I have this correctly then that reaching back across the nine months and looking at the deaths recalling them in your mind, in your mind you had rejected Susan Nelles as the common thread because on at least one occasion, the death of the Lombardo child, she had not been present?

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A. Yes. It stood out in my mind.

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Q. All right. How on the evening of March 24th, how did you know or how could you recall that Miss Nelles had not been present on the occasion of Lombardo's death?

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A. On the Tuesday night?



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Q. Yes. How could you remember that?

A. Because I think it was the night after Lombardo died I met Susan's brother who was a physician at the Hospital - he was a resident - I met him going down the stairs one night and we stopped and talked. And he said Susan was on vacation and I said, yes. I said there was an arrest last night and we missed her. I said she usually does the CPR and she does it very well. And he said yes, she has talked to me about that, and that is how come I remembered she wasn't there.

Q. Well, was that the extent of the conversation that you had with Mrs. Johnstone on the Tuesday evening?

A. We both were visibly shaken and felt that this was very, very - it was terrible and we didn't want to talk about it any more.

Q. Did you have further conversation with Mrs. Johnstone during the course of that shift on the subject?

A. No.

Q. Did you ever state to anyone other than to Mrs. Johnstone your belief that Susan Nelles was not involved in these deaths for the



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reason that you have given?

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A. At that time?

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Q. At that time or at any time
until now or in preparation for giving your evidence
here.

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A. When I gave a statement to the
police I told them that I found it difficult to
believe that Susan could have done it and that she
hadn't been there for some of the deaths.

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Q. Do you recall the occasion upon
which you said that to the police?

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A. When I talked to - it was after
Susan's arrest I had an interview with one of the
policemen.

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Q. Well perhaps Mr. Percivall will
be interested in pursuing that.

16

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Your recollection is clear,
Miss Coulson, is it, that you did tell the police
that it was your belief that Miss Nelles was not
the person responsible for the deaths and you
explained to them your reason for so believing?

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A. I told them I had trouble
believing that Susan did it and that she hadn't
been there for a lot of - no, not a lot, that she
hadn't been there for some of the deaths.

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Q. What was the response of the police officers when you said that?

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A. We are here to talk about Cook.

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Q. Is this the occasion of your first interview with the police?

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A. Yes.

8

9

Q. Which I think was late in April, was it not? Perhaps you can tell me?

10

A. The 3rd of April.

11

Q. Early in April. Sorry. Thank you.

12

13

You relayed that view to them at that time and the response was they were there to talk to you of Justin Cook?

14

15

A. Yes.

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Q. All right. Did you on any other occasion attempt to make that view known to the police? The view that Susan Nelles was not in your view responsible because she had not been there for some of the deaths?

20

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A. I had made a police statement to that - it was after the preliminary hearing.

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Q. After the preliminary hearing?

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A. Yes.

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Q. At any time between that

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first interview on April 3rd and the end of the preliminary hearing did you repeat your belief to the police?

A. I had another interview and I can't remember the interview itself so I don't know whether I said it or not.

Q. All right.

I just want to go to a very few particular matters if I may, Miss Coulson. Do I understand it correctly that your recollection of individual arrests and the particular events that occurred at individual arrests is not particularly good?

A. That is right.

Q. Can I just ask you one thing about the arrest of Allana Miller on the night preceding that on which Cook died?

A. Yes.

Q. You were present during the resuscitation effort on that child, were you not?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell me what you did there?

A. What I did? I remember setting up the defibrillator and I remember filling up the IV; the buretrol was just about dry and I filled



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2 that up.

3 Q. Do you know what was in the
4 buretrol or in the IV for that matter?

5 A. No, I don't remember.

6 Q. And you fill a buretrol what,
7 by releasing more of the fluid from the bag?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Down into the buretrol?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Just as a detour, please,
12 can you explain to me the process of flushing an
13 IV line? We have heard that referred to and it
14 occurs to me that you might be able to give us an
15 explanation that I at least have been lacking.

16 How do you do that?

17 A. Do you mean after when the
18 IV is blocked?

19 Q. All right. When would you
20 do it and how would you do it and why would you do
21 it?

22 A. If - when an antibiotic has
23 been given it is given over a period of time and
24 then what happens is a smaller - another amount of
25 IV solution is put into the buretrol and opened to
make sure that line is flushed with the IV solution



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2 and that the antibiotic then has gone from the tube
3 into the child.

4 Q. Okay. What do you do? You
5 put fluid into the buretrol?

6 A. Into the buretrol. The
7 buretrol is a long cylinder.

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Piece of apparatus, and you
10 would put a small amount of fluid from the top of
11 the - there is a little dial at the top from the bag,
12 and you put 10 c's or something into the buretrol.

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. And then the solution flows
15 through the drip chamber through the IV tubing.

16 Q. You then open the line; you
17 remove whatever it is that regulates --

18 A. No, the regulator, you don't
19 flush it. You could flush it at a certain speed;
20 just have it so that the line is being flushed through
21 with the antibiotic.

22 Q. Okay. When flushing do you
23 let material flow through the line at a faster rate
24 than it would normally?

25 A. Quicker, yes.

Q. All right. And you do it to



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clear out anything that happens to be in the IV
line from either the medication that has been
administered or anything of that sort?

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A. Yes.

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Q. With respect to any of the
babies at whose arrest you were present, did you
ever see anything that you regarded as unusual or
that at the time excited your interest or suspicion
or concern?

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A. Yes.

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Q. Can you tell us about that event, or those events please?

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A. I don't remember the child. I have looked at it and from looking at the chart and the time sheets I have narrowed it down to two children.

8

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Q. Yes, who are they?

A. Lombardo and Gionas.

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A. And it was during the arrest the potassium results came back and they were high, and the doctor ordered a plain bag of IV solution to be hung, and at the end of the arrest the doctor reached up and took the IV bag and put it into his pocket.

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Q. The plain IV bag that he had ordered hung there?

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A. No, the first bag that had been up there, he reached up and took that down and put it into his pocket.

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Q. You don't know which child it was? Are you able to tell us, if it were Gionas which physician it was; if it were Lombardo which physician it was?

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A. I could but I can't be definite



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that it is one of those two children. I have
narrowed it, it looks to me like it was one of those
two, and then I would have to look at the charts to
see which doctor it was.

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Q Did you make any comment or raise
any question when you saw that occur?

7

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A Yes. I went over to him and
asked him what he was doing.

9

10

Q What did he say?

11

A He was sending it down to the
lab, he was looking for potassium.

12

Q Is that what he said to you?

13

A I either asked him if he was
looking for a high potassium, or that is what he told
me, I don't remember the exact conversation.

15

16

Q What would a physician normally
do if he wanted to send anything to the lab, whether
it be the contents of an IV bag or anything else?

17

18

A He would send it to the lab,
send the bag to the lab for potassium.

19

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Q I take it he would not normally
put the object into his pocket?

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A That's right.

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Q And it was that that caused you
to raise the question?

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A. Yes.

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THE COMMISSIONER: I wonder if I could - there is quite a difference in the timing between Lombardo and Gionas; Gionas died on the 9th of March and Lombardo on the 23rd of December, that is three months. Isn't the fact that there is not - it's not three months, or nearly, it is two and a half months. Would that not assist you?

THE WITNESS: The only thing that I could remember was that there was another supervisor on with me and that I remember the room that it was in, that is why I narrowed it down to those two children, and I can't be certain which one it was.

THE COMMISSIONER: Do you remember the room it was in, that might help us, because have we not the rooms --

THE WITNESS: This other supervisor was the only supervisor that was on with me, we were the only two on --

THE COMMISSIONER: No, but if you could remember which room it was in you might be able to help us by determining --

THE WITNESS: That is why I came down to those two.

THE COMMISSIONER: They were both --



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THE WITNESS: They were both in that
room and they both had high potassium.

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THE COMMISSIONER: I see, you have
already anticipated everything I was going to say then.

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MR. LAMEK: Q. Indeed I take it from
your reluctance to identify the doctor you cannot be
absolutely certain it was indeed one or the other of
those two?

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A. That's right.

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Q. It might possibly have been
some other child?

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A. It could have been.

13

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Q. Did you subsequently hear anything
more about the lab tests run on the IV bag, that IV
bag?

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A. I asked the doctor later on
what the results were and he said they were okay.

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Q. You asked that same doctor?

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A. Yes.

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MR. ROLAND: Mr. Commissioner, I am
sorry to interject here. We have heard this in the
interview that took place and we have checked both
possible doctors with respect to those children. One
doctor was not even there and the other doctor says
he doesn't have any recollection and he certainly



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would not have done it. So we have not been able to track that down. We have been trying because we heard this in the interview and both possible doctors can't help us at all.

THE COMMISSIONER: Yes. All right, thank you.

MR. LAMEK: Q. Although you may not be able to identify the child and therefore the attending physician at the time of this incident, Miss Coulson, can you recall who it was, or whom it was that you asked later whether there was any report on the contents of the IV bag?

A. I know he had a mustache, that's all I can remember.

Q. You have to beware of people with mustaches.

THE COMMISSIONER: The trouble is they are inclined to shave them off too, some people are inclined to shave them off.

MR. LAMEK: Q. May I at least take it it was a male doctor?

A. Yes.

MR. LAMEK: Mr. Commissioner, I am going to be a few minutes longer, perhaps we could complete it in the morning?



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THE COMMISSIONER: Yes. We will

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recess now until 10 o'clock.

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--- Whereupon the Hearing was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.
until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 21st, 1984.

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